

## TRAMI WP3 Task 3.2 Mutual Learning Event with ERRIN

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**TITLE:** Exploring synergies between EU Missions and European Partnerships – practical approach

**ORGANISERS:** TRAMI (WP3) and ERRIN

**VENUE:** NCBR Brussels Office, Rue Belliard 40, 1040 Brussels, 5<sup>th</sup> Floor

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**Introduction:** TRAMI in collaboration with ERRIN ran a Mutual learning event (MLE) to explore synergies between European Partnerships and EU Missions. While these two initiatives of the Horizon Europe programme have unique characteristics, aligning them strategically can lead to transformative outcomes for our economy and society. A well-coordinated approach between European Partnerships and EU Missions will help to tackle some of Europe's most pressing challenges while contributing to the achievement of the Missions' objectives.

**Objectives of event:** The objective was to focus on synergies from a practical perspective by engaging experts directly involved in the implementations of EU Missions and Partnerships. Furthermore, the MLE was to contribute to the reflections on the creation of the upcoming FP10 by providing reflections on what is working well, but also key challenges and potential areas for improvement.

The collaborative exchange during the event presents a unique opportunity for participants to engage in a practical and shared learning experience.

**Attendees** – the event gathered approx. 66 attendees, this included representatives of regional offices, public authorities, representatives of academic organisation and university alliances, along with organisations involved in the implementation of Missions projects or Partnerships.

**Methodology** – An overview of the TRAMI project and MLE introduction, and its objectives was provided by Karolina Dutkiewicz-Garcia from National Centre for Research and Development Poland and Grainne Ryan from Enterprise Ireland.

Following the overview presentations, Pirita Lindholm, ERRIN introduced topic setting the scene for the other presenters:

- Margit Noll, FFG (Austria) involved in the Driving Urban Transition Partnership,
- Gudrun Haindlmaier AIT, Austria, involved in the CapaCITIES Project,
- Virginia Puzzolo Circular Bio-based Europe Joint Undertaking,
- Irene Palomino from Region of Extremadura engaged in the Soil Deal for Europe Mission,

Following the presentations, the participants were selectively divided into 6 breakout groups to address a number of key questions. The participants in the groups were preselected to endeavour to ensure a balance between all stakeholders. Please find below a combined summary of the outputs of the groups.

### Summary of outputs of breakout groups

The participants address a series of questions and below is a summary of their comments.

**1. What are the main or potential synergies between the European Partnerships and the EU Missions? Are there specific sectors or areas where such collaboration could be particularly beneficial?**

First of all, there is a need to state the current perception of the EU Missions and Partnerships. Missions are perceived like black boxes – due to lack of (positive) press and visible success stories, (with exception of the Cities mission, that is seen as the most successful). Whereas the partnerships have a clearer structure and operational system, even though they are numerous or as for some, too many.

Secondly, we need to define what are the synergies (what can be a challenge itself) and we need to understand and outline what are the potential benefits?

 Synergies from the perspective of: **NATIONAL, LOCAL and REGIONAL LEVEL**

- The national level is involved in the creation of the calls in some co-funded partnerships. Meanwhile, Member States have to report to the EC on the progress of the missions. This means that the national level ideally is the best placed to adapt the calls of the partnerships to the objectives and activities of the missions. It was suggested that the Ocean and Waters Mission and the blue economy partnerships potentially could be suitable for this.
- There is currently a disconnection between the strategic level and the implementation level, where the people on the ground do not understand the objectives set by the strategic level. Therefore:
  - Synergies have to be established at the top level (top-down) to create a common structure and coordination. However, the motivation has to exist at the top level for this to happen.
  - On the other hand, local stakeholders cannot always count on the EC to come with the direction, sometimes the local actors need to find tailored-made solutions for their territory. This requires creativity and an innovative approach from the local actors.
- Working on the Mission at a local level has led to a more integrated way of working, involving departments that may have previously been more siloed. This has also created links with people working on more research-oriented activities such as Partnerships. It is important to note that the technologies to be supported and deployed through the EU Partnership calls will need to be deployed and implemented on the ground. This would contribute to the achievement of mission objectives.

 As for the actual and/or potential synergies we can enumerate:

- **FUNDING** (additional and one that works mutually). Providing funding to the mission implementation secretaries will help to manage the expectations and achieve the goals. Without it, this will be difficult and any additional burden transferred on the member state's shoulders requires resources.
- **SYNERGIES OF DATA**: Collecting, storing or sharing, could be beneficial for the stakeholders but actions must be taken to achieve synergies of data.
- **SYNERGIES IN MONITORING** (potential) – e.g. monitoring indicators could be synergistic, both initiatives could help reciprocal awareness raising, cross-instrument outreach, or experts that could bring in their knowledge and experience at different stages of projects.
- We could pilot or test technologies from the partnership through the missions – for example to use the living labs established under relevant missions. It needs to be stressed that synergies may be executed at the project level, when you combine different sources of funding or at the governance level, when you involve experts and program top-down approach using these two instruments.

## 2. Could you share any first-hand experiences of successful collaborations or synergies between EU Partnerships and EU Missions?

- ✚ Partnerships bring technologies, while missions are more about social change and social transformation, would involve SSH and bringing the products/services to the market. Therefore, it is clear complementarity – partnership would be welcome to support lower TRL (i.e. rather RIA, sometimes IA), while missions, as rather higher-TRL-oriented, could focus on CSA (possibly IA) – but even they do not go beyond 8 TRL, so that requires some synergies with subsequent policymaking. Look for double beneficiaries – and ask them about their experience.
- ✚ Practically there are few examples of the synergies between the European Partnerships and the EU Missions. There would be more synergies if they would be planned strategically. We should consider that under the next FP and from the bottom-up perspective. What kind of things work, which do not? Maybe we should consider if the FP10 is the best place for missions like Soil, and Oceans. EU Missions have further potential beyond R&I but then synergies and collaboration with partnerships might be more difficult or if we find a more suitable location then we need a dedicated platform to manage it.
- ✚ Examples of collaborations:
  - Mission Soil and net-zero cities – collaborations themselves are wider. The Cancer Mission is narrow and more specific, so the number the of partners is limited. The wider the mission the easier is to create synergies and collaboration. However, with large and wide objectives it might be also difficult to reach them.
  - Some synergies can be found between the Ocean and Waters Mission and the blue economy partnership.
  - Italian Veneto region is a partner in the THCS partnership. They wanted also to align activities to not overlap them but the challenge was to find the resources and experts to follow these synergies and collaboration or even one person to deal with both initiatives but this action is demanding, too many initiatives to follow, too many people to contact with what is impossible to cover with organisational structures that are not tailored to the Horizon Europe.
  - France is engaged in a partnerships of Clean Sky and Clean Aviation JU. There was a discussion from a partnership perspective on how to bring all the ideas together on the national level and on the European one. There was also a call for interest for the companies to lift small players to be part of the partnership and this way bring them to the discussion. Current status: in the process.
  - In Sweden, Vinnova, The Swedish Energy Agency and FORMAS teamed up to create Impact Innovation, a call for proposals that were in mission oriented actions and topics. Consortia were asked to prepare the proposals and were free to define the mission they wish to work towards. Mixing bottom-up and top-down approaches while involving a diversity of actors from private companies to sectorial government agencies.
- ✚ Examples of (future) collaboration: Process4Planet Partnership could develop synergies with Mission Cities and Mission Adaptation; Transforming the Health System Partnership, Personalised Medicine Partnership, IHI Partnership and the future EU Partnership on Rare Diseases are likely to collaborate with the Cancer Mission.

## 3. What mechanisms are not working and how can they be improved to better facilitate collaboration between EU Missions and European Partnerships?

- ✚ Synergies and collaboration between Missions and EU Partnerships are essential to avoid duplication (e.g. do not fund what has already been funded, but make more connections and replicate solutions).
  - ✚ Some European Partnerships have noted a 'big push' for synergies, but very often this is unrealistic: the ambitions of the EC are not matched by the resources. Ambitions need to be realistic!!!
  - ✚ Some European Partnerships have initiated joint meetings with other Partnerships to understand each other's SRIAs and avoid duplication.
  - ✚ Overlaps should not be created at the policy level. It has been noted that new and overlapping EU Partnerships are being created rather than refocusing the existing ones.
  - ✚ Difficulties in managing joint calls. This is a limitation in fostering synergies between EU Partnerships and Missions, as well as between Partnerships.
  - ✚ Synergies between missions and partnerships go beyond funding: how can we use each other's networks and communities?
  - ✚ The synchronization between the partnerships and missions is not working. There is no or limited communication between the partnerships and the missions when the partnerships prepare their calls, which would be important to ensure that the calls align with the missions.
  - ✚ In some countries, the missions and partnerships focus on or sit in different governance levels, e.g. cities or regions are leading on the activities in the missions while the national level may be involved in the relevant EU Partnerships, which makes it very difficult to create synergies between them.  
In France it is mostly the national level that is involved in the co-funded partnerships. The responsibilities for the missions and partnerships sit in different ministries at the national level, who do not communicate and coordinate with each other.
  - ✚ There are inefficiencies in the process. Joint calls not working due to legal issues and the fact that the main actors/ stakeholders have no experience of working together. There is a clear lack of familiarity with the HE and lack of capacity and resources.
  - ✚ Industry involvement is also a challenge they need to find an entry point. Corporate strategies need to align with HE e.g. climate. Is it R&I policy to drive industrial policy? or the other way?
- ✚ Missions need to go beyond the Brussels bubble, engage different stakeholders – always remember who we do it for. Since these two are completely different activities they need to meet at the EC management level to make a framework agreement and create mutual understanding. One of the main barriers is to emphasize the necessity to coordinate and communicate and avoid silo -thinking. Also aligning the priorities would be helpful. There is no mechanism that foster informed decision taking, but one should be in place.
- ✚ Mission as such go beyond R&I therefore it is a challenge to spread them across the public not familiar with Horizon Europe program – in particular taking into account the high level of ambition in the missions. The discussion needs to go on a different level and go beyond the political cycle. Even the regulatory framework doesn't mean people will necessarily adapt to the missions. For instance, some of the institutions – RTO for instance – may participate in a concrete mission call, but do not integrate the mission approach.
- ✚ Structural fund with framework programme. They have different durations and we need to explore how to align them.

#### 4. What suggestions do you have for strengthening synergies between EU Missions and European Partnerships in the next Framework Programme FP10?

- ✚ In order to improve cooperation between partnerships and missions, it was proposed to take steps towards:
  - Clarification: The involvement of local actors in Partnerships, who play a key role in the implementation of Missions on the ground, should be clarified.
  - Simplify the process: it's difficult for regional and local actors to navigate and access these opportunities.
  - Rationalisation and definition of priorities: role of the EC in facilitating synergies. Define common objectives, not synergies for the sake of synergies, just showcasing does not create satisfaction and added value. Something that needs to be defined in the whole process. More flexibility in calls, more links between missions/partnerships.
- ✚ There should be stronger incentives for cities and regions to be involved in the missions. The governance structure has to allow all actors to be involved from the start. These actors should also be involved in the discussions on what challenges and needs on the ground that the missions and the partnerships are equipped to address.
- ✚ Proper governance is the key – strong governance at all levels that involves all stakeholders to ensure that the activities and calls correspond to actual needs is needed. There should be stronger incentives for all actors to be involved, e.g. through ear-marked funding. Engagement with actors beyond from research, i.e. multi-actor engagement, will be important for the future of missions and partnerships.
- ✚ The missions provide the vision and the partnerships can act as building blocks to achieve that vision.
- ✚ The current problem with mission – their unclear role, being on top of everything – needs clarity, objectivity and coherency, for example: it remains vague how missions and clusters are aligned – missions are in the clusters, but are overarching instrument and have separate work program, and the patch of regular calls, partnership calls etc. that do not necessarily contribute to the mission – there's no clear line thus what should be funded where. Maybe FP does not need clusters, but mission instead, as more general? Also it needs to be determined who the potential stakeholders of both missions and partnerships are – and help them navigate, like SME, as we really want to attract them to the missions. So the better structure is crucial and could be easily implemented under FP10.
- ✚ Capacity building for employees, students, citizens, authorities should also be a target.
- ✚ Missions are earmarked with calls by labelling them.
- ✚ Additional criteria for EU Missions and European Partnerships about forming the synergies between the initiatives are needed.